

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-3 and 6-11 are pending herein. The amendment to claim 1 is supported by Figure 1 and the specification at page 14, lines 8-19 and page 24, lines 14-22, for example. Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added.

Claims 1-3 and 6-11 were rejected under §103(a) over Kato '181 in view of Yamada and Sugiyama, and further in view of Kato '335. To the extent that the present rejection may be applied against the amended claims, it is respectfully traversed.

Amended claim 1 recites that the sensor element includes a reference gas-introducing space and a first detecting means having an inner electrode in the first space and a reference electrode in the reference gas-introducing space. Claim 1 also recites that an air-fuel ratio of the measurement gas is determined by the first detecting means from a voltage between the inner pumping electrode and the reference electrode, and a pumping current of the main pumping means.

Kato '181, Yamada, Sugiyama and Kato '335 all disclose sensor elements. Applicants respectfully submit, however, that neither Yamada, Sugiyama or Kato '335 suggest using the first detecting means of the gas sensor element to determine the air-fuel ratio, as now claimed. Further, while Kato '181 mentions using the first chamber for determining the air fuel ratio in general terms (col. 3, lines 56-58 and col. 19, lines 35-39), Kato fails to teach or suggest the specific method recited in amended claim 1 for determining the air-fuel ratio.

Based on the above, Applicants respectfully submit that the cited references fail to teach or suggest each and every element of amended claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims herein define patentable subject matter over the art of record.

If the Examiner believes that contact with Applicants' attorney would be advantageous toward the disposition of this case, the Examiner is herein requested to call Applicants' attorney at the phone number noted below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees associated with this communication or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-1446.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date



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